

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the due consideration given the application. No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this Response.

Claims 1-9 are pending in the present application.

Election/Restriction

The Examiner has restricted the claims of the invention into the following groups:

I. Claims 1-8, drawn to an oligonucleotide that specifically binds to human tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF- α) selected from SEQ ID Nos.: 1-28; and

II. Claim 9, drawn to a method of making SEQ ID Nos.: 1-28.

Applicants elect Group I, claims 1 and 3-8 with traverse.

Claims 2 and 9 are withdrawn from further consideration at this time.

The Examiner has further restricted the invention into the aptamer sequences listed in claims 1-3 that are SEQ ID Nos.: 1-28, noting that up to 10 independent and distinct nucleotide sequences will be examined in a single application.

Applicants elect SEQ ID No. 25 with traverse.

The Examiner additionally restricts claims 1-3 as having unrelated species in a Markush grouping to result in an alleged undue burden on the Examiner.

Applicants traverse.

It is respectfully submitted that by electing RNA SEQ No. 25, Applicants have complied with the Examiner's requirement to select one claimed antisense sequence. Applicants thank the

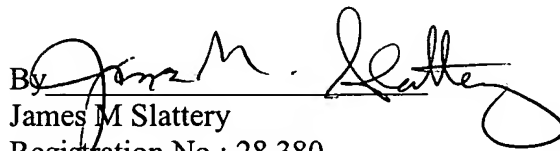
Examiner for the curtsies extended during a telephone interview on April 13, 2006. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at 703-205-8015 if any further election of the claims is required to be responsive to the Examiner's Office Action.

Conclusion

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: April 13, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 
James M Slattery
Registration No.: 28,380
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Rd
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant